

# CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

Pres: Mr G. Sitch  
Sec: Mr S. Bruton  
Treas: Mr L. Bransgrove  
Newsletter: Mr G. Broadway

JUNE 1980

47



## FUNGI OF THE CASTLEMAINE DISTRICT

by Rita Mills

### FLOWER FUNGUS *Thelephora* spp.

This very attractive pinkish brown fungus was found in the Moonlight Flat pine plantation. Apparently they are fairly widespread but seldom form the complete rosette which gives them the common name of Flower Fungus

The plant sits directly on the ground, which is a mass of the white mycelial threads.

Meetings are held at the Castlemaine Education Centre, in Mostyn Street, on the second Friday of each month at 8 p.m.

Outings are usually held on the following Saturday or Sunday as announced. We welcome visitors to attend either meetings or outings



by Terry Collins

If only grown-ups could spend more time with their children and bring them the knowledge and the will to seek out and examine the tiny living creatures that exist just around their own houses. Some parents have the time and patience but usually due to work loads this role falls on grandparents. More the pity, but a gain for the Grandpa and Grandma.

Our bush block at Campbell's Creek has its share of nature and so, with our grandchildren who spend all their school holidays here we have our own nature lessons. All creatures are classified thus :- "Special Friends". "Friends", and "Bad Friends". All are tolerated equally and a heinous crime is to accidentally step on a tiny ant. "Special Friends" include a Stumpy Tailed lizard.

now three-quarters grown who has for the past two winters hibernated in a built up garden with railway sleepers as a wall. Then there is a "Jacky Jacky" lizard who winters somewhere under a rosmarinifolia bush on an embankment. These two are noticed usually around Easter sunning themselves near their "homes". In fact the Stumpy Tail accepts small pieces of mincemeat left near his entrance.



Then we have all our various Ant nests; all classified by our gang. From the very tiny to the very friendly Sugar or Meat ants, brown in colour and about 20 mm long. One grandson on vacation feeds dead grasshoppers to his "Special Friends" who have a well constructed nest on the embankment. Next we have spiders of all descriptions. The early morning delight is to study the beautiful weaving of the webs suspended between shrubs about 12 feet apart and about 8 feet high. The question "How did the spider get from one bush to the other?". Then there is the dewy morning with the webs all over the ground showing up. The railway sleeper area with its garden has its large family of small lizards all classified as "Special Friends". They sun themselves in late Autumn and early Spring on the steps and seem to be entirely unafraid of human presence.



Not to forget the several frogs in the vegetable garden and the hornets with their mud nests in queer places even in the overflow pipe of the water tank in our camper van, the study of our Preying Mantis, and the discovery of where they have built their egg nests and all the other good and bad insects. Not to forget either our daily rescue of bees who have been snared in our small swimming pool and the building of a small bridge over a terra cotta drain so one family of large brown sugar ants can travel from their nest to a Banksia tree in bloom.

Contd. on page 7

# must pools or toadstools

Notes on the fungi shown  
on the next two pages.

Is this a mushroom? Yes.

It could be a toadstool too.

Mushrooms are just gilled toadstools  
that are good to eat.

They all belong to a group of 'non-green' plants called fungi.

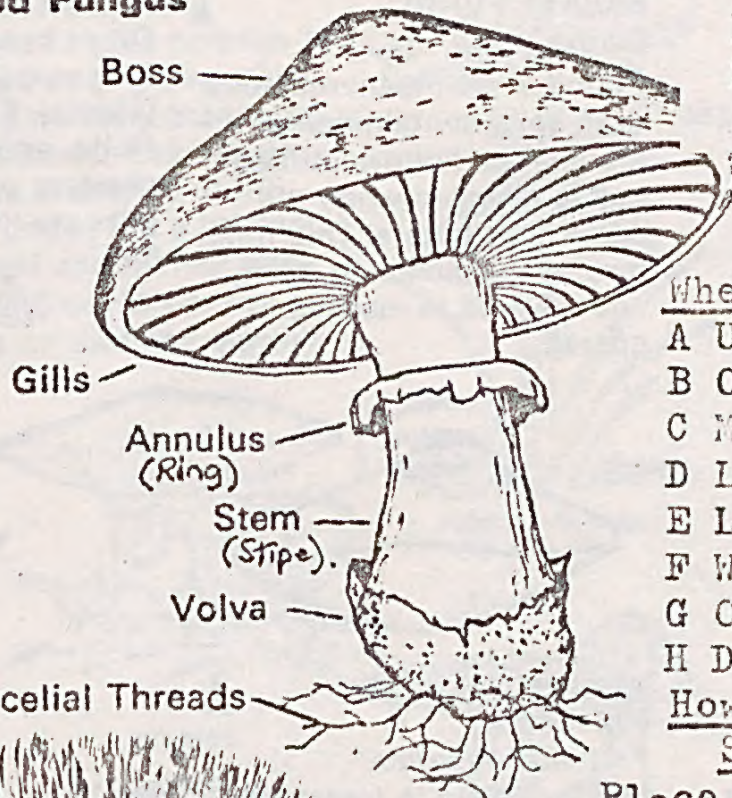
## Gilled Fungus

There are many types of fungi.  
Mildew, rusts, smuts, slime  
moulds and microscopic  
bacteria are some of the fungi  
which you might come across.



The largest fungi family are  
the Agarics - the gilled fungi.  
But not all fungi have gills.

The group called *Polypores*  
have tubes or pores in which  
the spores develop.



## When to look

Numbers refer to the  
number of the month.

e.g.

1 January

2 February

etc.

## Where to look

A Under pine trees

B On fallen bush timber

C Manure, rotting grass

D Lawns, grassy paddock

E Long grass

F Wet, mossy patches

G On live trees

H Dead leaves & humus.

## How to Make a

### Spore Print

Place a cap or a piece of  
a cap gills down on a  
piece of transparent  
material or white paper.

Make sure the specimen  
does not dry out too  
quickly by wrapping or  
covering it. A spore  
print will result in a  
few hours. A white

background allows shades of  
colour to be determined.

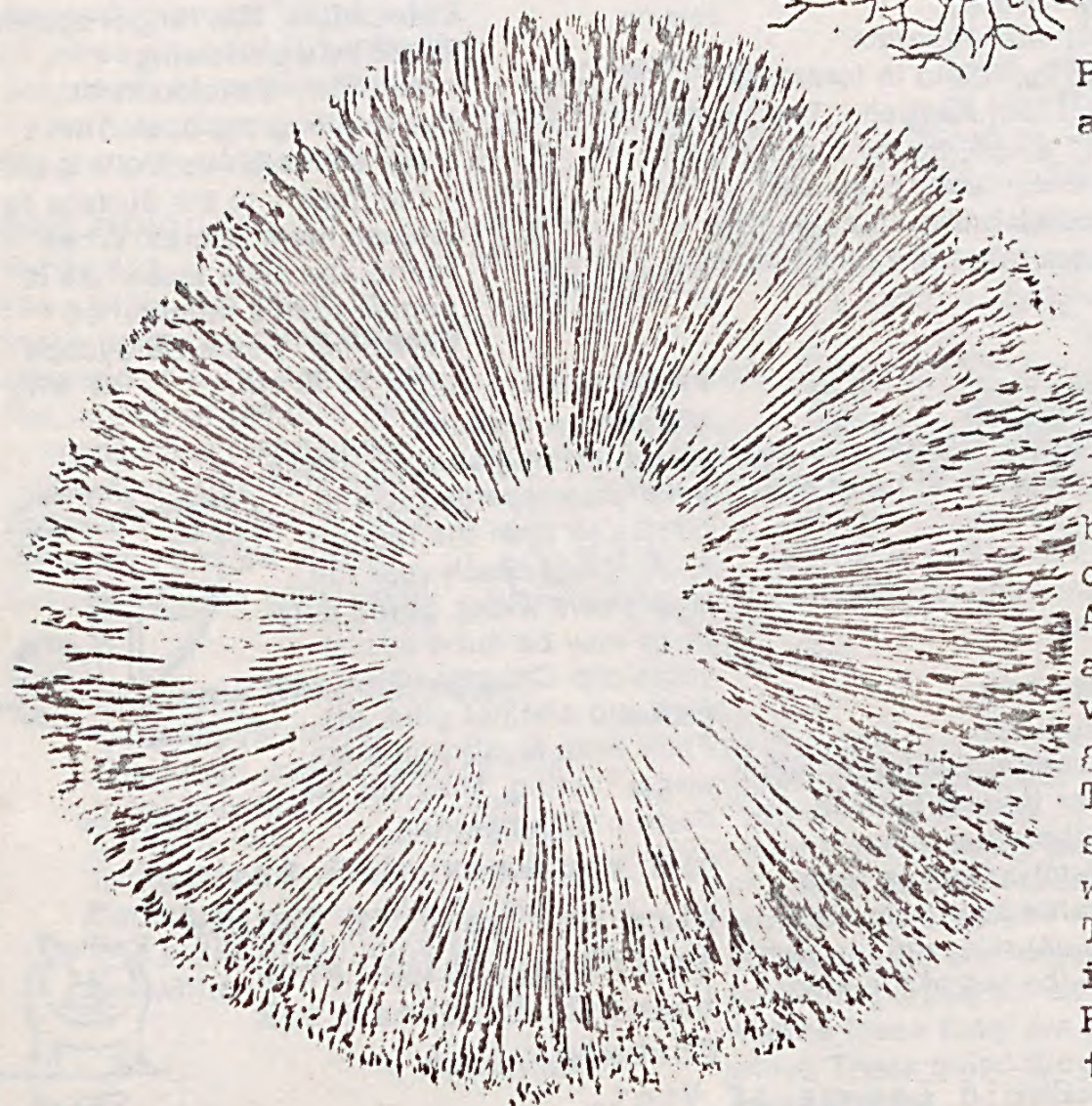
A transparent carrier  
allows a comparison of  
various coloured back-  
grounds.

The actual colour of the  
spores in the print shown  
was a purplish brown. —

This allows it to be  
identified as a mushroom —

*Psalliota xanthoderma*,  
the Yellow-staining

Mushroom



# Interesting Fungi To Look For

## PUFF-BALL

*Geastrum spp.*

Victoria has about 60 known species of puff-ball fungi. The Earth-star is one. (See page 13). The fruit begins its early life as a globe, gradually growing to 2 layers. The outer one splits and forms a star, the inner remains as a ball. It contains the spores which explode out when mature. D234

## LITTLE PIN

*Omphalia fibula*

Seen growing on moss or in similar cool, moist sheltered places, this tiny fungi looks like a little pin, with its pin-like yellowish cap and white gills. F67



## MYCENA

*Mycena spp.*

Quite often found growing in dense clusters on mountain forest floors. The brightly colored fruits are clear and small. The 'elfin' cap is flattened against the stem when young. BH456



MOREL



EARTH STAR

## BASKET FUNGI

*Clathrus spp.*

Found in well-manured soils or in soils containing leaf mould. The hollow-latticed ball is revealed when the outer case bursts. This fungi may be evil-smelling, slimy and covered in masses of spores. FB5



## BEEF-STEAK FUNGI

(Ox-tongue)

*Fistulina hepatica*

May be found in forests of southern Australia. The cap of this tough, fleshy fungi is wrinkled and rough and reddish-brown in color. The spore tubes are pink or yellow.

## MOREL

*Morchella elata*

The honeycomb patterned cap of the edible Morel fungi sits on a hollow stalk. They may be found in spring in woods and under hedges where the soil is rich.

## EARTH STAR

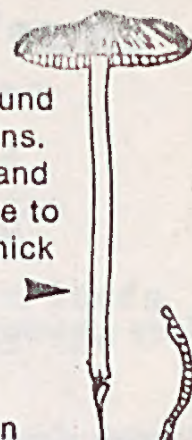
*Geastrum spp.*

The common Earth Star has a complex fruiting body in which the outer layer (peridium) splits and folds backwards as it dries. The spores are released through a hole in the top of the inner layers. F456

## ROOTING SHANK

*Collybia radicata*

This world-wide fungi is found in Australia in shady gardens. It has a long, tail-like root and colors range from pale olive to dark brown. The gills are thick and clear, shining white. BF56



## VELVET FOOT

*Collybia velutipes*

Often seen growing on fallen timber, especially wattles (acacia). The orange-yellow fruits appear in dense clusters on curved stems. The gills are thin and white. BH5



## VEGETABLE CATERPILLAR

*Cordyceps spp.*

The curious Cordyceps fungi is a parasite on some caterpillars. The fungal spores, eaten by a burrowing caterpillar, develop in its body, killing the host. The fungi sends up its fruiting part - the stalk - to the surface to release more spores. When found, the stalk looks like it comes from a mummified caterpillar. Some Cordyceps grow to 30 cm. BF 678

## FAIRY RING

*Marasmius oreades*

When left undisturbed, these small mushrooms grow in circles to form the famous Fairy Rings. Each year the ring grows wider. Some large rings may be hundreds of years old. Creamy-white, with free and distinct gills, the Fairy Ring Mushrooms are sweet tasting. They are the French 'Champignon'.



FAIRY RING

Did you know that trained pigs are used to locate truffles, which grow beneath European oak forests



Acknowledgement: to the Gould League of Vict.

### CORAL FUNGI

*Clavaria flava*

The fruit of the Coral Fungi may be found in damp bush gullies on decaying logs, tree stumps, posts, etc. Although fragile in appearance, the branching fingers of this fungi are firm and rubbery. BFH 56



CORAL FUNGI



FLAME FUNGI

### FLAME FUNGI

*Clavulinopsis miniata*

The Flame fungus belongs to the Coral Fungi group which all have delicately branching fruiting bodies. The simple contorted branches of the Flame Fungus are a brilliant orange-red color. They grow to about 15 cm in dense colonies on swampy ground.



HONEY FUNGI

### HONEY FUNGI

*Armillaria mellea*

This yellow-brown colored fungi resembles honey and edible. Most forms have a cap with brownish scales, a prominent white ring on the stem and flesh-colored gills. Honey Fungi grow in clusters on old, rotting tree stumps.

### SLENDER PARASOL

*Lepiota gracilentia*

This edible mushroom found in wet areas, and along stream edges, appears after the first good autumn rains. Umbrella shaped, with a tall, stiff stem and a delicate movable ring, this mushroom has small dense scales on its cap. It has a good flavour.



SLENDER PARASOL

### BOLETUS

*Boletus spp.*

ADEH 345

All mushrooms and true toadstools belong to the family of gilled fungi called Agarics. The spores of the Agarics are borne on the gills. The Boletus fungi is a Polypore (means many-tubes) and its spores develop in fine tubes beneath the cap. These tubes or pores are exposed from the beginning of its growth, and never protected by a veil as are the gills of the Agarics.



BOLETUS



FLY AGARIC

### + FLY AGARIC

*Amanita muscaria*

This fungi has a scarlet-red cap flecked with white scales. It also has a white fleshy stem bearing a flange or 'ring' around the top, and the base is ensheathed in a cup or 'volva' - which is a good sign of it being poisonous. It has white gills and spores. A45

### DISC FUNGI

*Peziza spp.*

The simple cup shape of these fungi can often be seen attached to earth and wood. The largest of the disc fungi is shaped like orange-peel from which it gets its name. There are many edible fungi in this group but the elastic flesh is not very appetising. BH 345



DISC FUNGI



RAINBOW BRACKET

### RAINBOW BRACKET FUNGI

*Coriolus versicolor*

The tough, bracket part of this fungi may be found on most kinds of timber. It can destroy living trees. The velvety top is decorated with bands of color. The pores of the underside are white. BG All year



### GHOST FUNGI

(LUMINOUS AGARICS)

*Pleurotus nidiformis*

Occurs in temperate parts of all states. Look for them around the bases of eucalypts. Colors range from brown to purple, but when mature these fungi are almost white. These gilled fungi glow eerily at night. BG3456



SAFFRON MILK CAP

### SAFFRON MILK CAP

*Lactarius deliciosus*

This mushroom was introduced from Europe and appears only where pine trees are growing, the fungal threads forming a relationship with the tree roots. Often quite large, the cap is an orange-red color with darker blotches. The stem is short and thick. When cut, this fungi oozes an orange milk.

+ Poisonous

## FUNGUS IDENTIFICATION

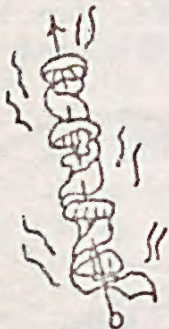
To assist in identifying your collection, watch for the following features :-

1. Whether the gills are free or attached to the stem.
2. The colour of the spores. To do this you will need a spore print.
3. Whether a volva is present. (If it is, treat with caution)
4. Is a ring or annulus present ?
5. The stem or stipe. Is it  
thick or slender  
fibrous or cartilaginous  
easily broken, i.e. brittle  
attached to the centre of the cap
6. Do the cap and gills turn to liquid on maturity ?
7. If the gills are attached,  
note the type of attachment



### MUSHROOMS ON TOAST

6 medium mushrooms bread for toast butter  
Wash mushrooms (peel if necessary). Slice them.  
Melt 2 teaspoons of butter in frypan. Add mushrooms, fry for 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally.  
Toast bread. Place fried mushrooms on buttered toast. Top with sultanas, grated cheese and chopped parsley to serve.



### MUSHROOMS AND BACON

For each serve: 1 long rasher of bacon (rind off)  
4 mushrooms 1 skewer

Thread the end of each rasher of bacon onto skewer, then a mushroom, interweaving the bacon with the mushrooms.  
Grill under medium griller until the bacon is crisp, turn and grill other side.

### CHICKEN AND MUSHROOM SOUP

1 chicken stock cube or can chicken soup  
fresh or dried mushrooms squeeze of garlic

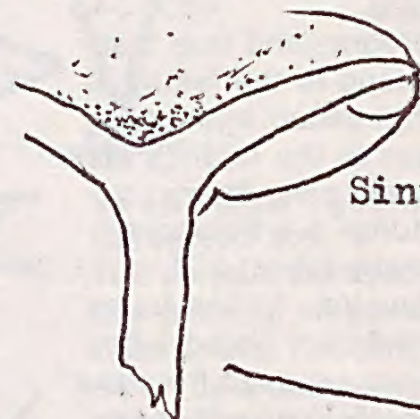
Slice fresh mushrooms. Dissolve stock cube in 1½ cups water. Simmer sliced mushrooms in stock for about 20 mins. until tender, serve with sprinkling of parsley.

NOTE - if using dried mushrooms, cover with hot water for 10 mins. then add one can chicken soup and one cup water. Simmer for 10 mins.

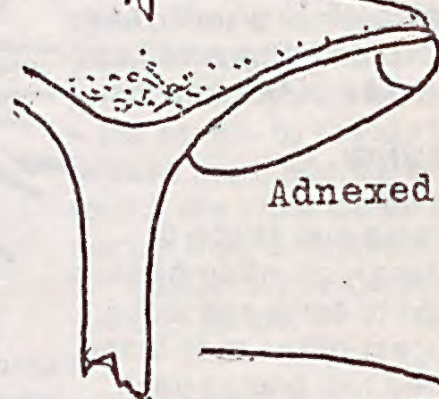


### MUSHROOM QUICHE (keysh)

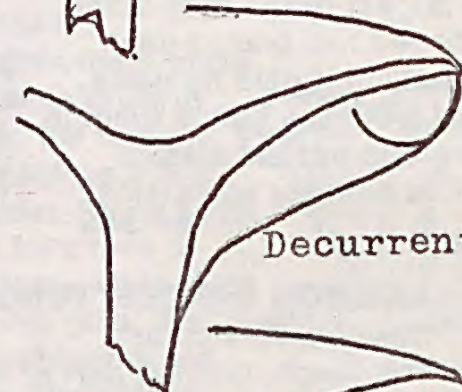
Grease a 20 cm sandwich tin and line with finely rolled pastry. Fry mushrooms in a little butter. Place in pastry case. Beat 2 eggs into 2/3 cup milk, add salt and pepper. Pour gently over mixture, dust with paprika and bake in moderate oven (175°C) for almost 20 minutes until custard filling is set. Serve with salad.



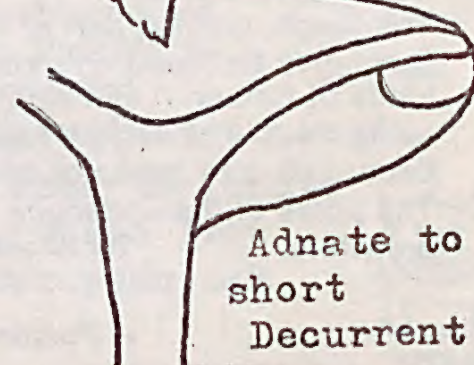
Sinuate



Adnexed



Decurrent



Adnate to  
short  
Decurrent

The distance travelled is about fifty yards.. This takes place early in the evening and all night.

Some would say this family is "crackers" but we love it that way. What is better than to have a small child race into the house calling "Pa, quick, come and look at this".

We, the human race, with so many wonderful small things around us take it all for granted. So, next time you have a moment to spare, take the "kids" out into the garden and seek out the small creatures who live with us, work hard for survival, and really cause no harm.

### DRAIN EYESORE TO BECOME CREEK

It has been reported recently (unfairly perhaps), that the City Council is planning to convert the creek which flows through our city into a drain. This is the fate which has overtaken many similar watercourses which were misguided enough to flow through a built-up area. It is interesting therefore to note that at LaTrobe University plans are afoot to convert a M.M.B.W. drain into a creek. Castlemaine residents should be interested to note that it is proposed that this should be done by means of the following :-

- (a) Planting River Red Gums - to reach maturity in 200 years
- (b) Creating shallow ponds and rapids to improve the variety of habitats and increase aesthetic appeal.
- (c) Constructing siltation and flood retention dams of natural logs and stones to act as a filter for pollutants in the water flow - cans, bottles, oil scum, etc.
- (d) Creating a main lake and shallow swampy areas to create an ecosystem which will be attractive to waterfowl.
- (e) Regenerating an area which has been used as a rubbish dump by planting with 30,000 plants indigenous to the area.

When completed, it is expected that the area will become an important resource for the population of the Northern Metropolitan area.

Perhaps there is some expertise here which could be used to advantage in Castlemaine ?

A plant list for the bush area between Sandon and Campbelltown

Acacia pycnantha (Golden wattle)	Eucalyptus microcarpa (Grey box)
A. acinacea (Gold-dust wattle)	E. macrorhyncha (Red stringybark)
Dianella revoluta (Flax lily)	E. gonicalyx (Long-leaf box)
Dillwynia sericea (Parrot pea)	E. leucoxylon (Yellow gum)
Daviesia virgata (Bitter pea)	Pimelia linifolia (Rice flower)
Helichrysum bracteatum	Helichrysum obcordatum (Grey ever-
Dichopogon stictus (Chocolate	Thelymitra ixioides lasting)
Brachyloma daphnoides lily)	Lomandra filiformis
Bursaria spinosa (Sweet bursaria)	Kardenbergia violacea (Coral-pea)

MEETINGS

Friday June 13

Speaker : Mr G. Sith  
Subject : The Sex Life of  
Plants.

5 minute talk Mr E. Perkins  
"Tailed Spiders"

EXCURSIONS

Saturday June 14 Fryerstown Ridge  
(probably)

Leader : Mr R Smart.  
Leave Ed Centre, Mostyn St at 1.30  
There will probably be a short walk  
but nothing too strenuous.  
The road has been recently graded so  
should not prove too hazardous.

Excursion Etiquette : Following a couple of instances on recent outings when members of the party became (temporarily) lost or mislaid, members of excursion groups are reminded of the important rule which governs such events.

When in a line of cars, no driver should drive on following a change of direction without making sure that the driver of the car following is aware of the change of direction. If necessary, wait for the next vehicle to catch up, while doing so, the driver of the vehicle ahead should also come to a halt, and so on. In other words, you are responsible for the vehicle behind you, always make certain that the driver knows which way you have gone.

November Campout : Mr G. Sith has suggested another campout in the Grampians in late November. This would involve a hike to the Mitchell Plateau, and would involve some fairly strenuous walking and climbing. Interested members should perhaps get in some early training.

Bird Atlas It is hoped that the club might be able to send in more frequent reports to the Bird Atlas in the future, To assist matters, a numbered list of birds of Australia will be available to be taken each month by interested members. It was suggested at the last committee meeting that this list could be displayed in the house and each bird ticked off as it is observed during the month. At the end of the month the list should be returned and exchanged for a new one. All the lists will be collated and the final result forwarded to the Atlas. Some copies of the map will also be available if required. Members are referred to issue number 30 of the "Castlemaine Naturalist" in which the bird atlas was featured.

Some things to observe in **JUNE**



LOOKOUT  
FOR  
HERONS

BRIGHT  
CORTINARS  
+  
AMANTAS  
ARE  
COMING  
THRU THE LITTER



WOOLLY BEARS  
ARE  
MAKING COCOONS

